

RESOURCE TRANSCRIPT

Title: Mason Presents: Fritz Wetherbee on The Old Man of the Mountain

Caption: Granite State storyteller Fritz Wetherbee shares the tale of the Old Man of the Mountain.

Credit: New Hampshire Historical Society

Fritz Wetherbee: In 1805, Francis Whitcomb and Luke Brooks were surveying a road through Franconia Notch. The story goes they were washing their hands in Profile Lake when one of them looked up and saw it. Set above the treetops that sweep the side of Cannon Mountain was a great stone face—the Old Man of the Mountain. Although there are numerous legends that surround him, there is no real indication that native Indians ever saw him. From a distance, his face is so perfectly formed that it's hard to imagine that it was formed by nature, but it was. If you try to get closer to look at him, the elusive Old Man will disappear. And that's because his face is really made of five different ledges. Through years of weathering he needs a little help to keep everything in the right place. A chain here, a rod there, to keep the Old Man looking, well, old.

Note: this audio clip was recorded before the Old Man fell, on May 3, 2003.